

the purposes of the Principle of Priority but not for those of the Principle of Homonymy;

- (2) to use its plenary powers to set aside all previous fixations of type species for the nominal genus *Hydromantes* Gistel, 1848 and to designate *Spelerpes platycephalus* Camp, 1916 as the type species;
- (3) to place on the Official List of Generic Names in Zoology the name *Hydromantes* Gistel, 1848 (gender: masculine), type species by designation in (2) above *Spelerpes platycephalus* Camp, 1916;
- (4) to place on the Official List of Specific Names in Zoology the name *platycephalus* Camp, 1916, as published in the binomen *Spelerpes platycephalus* (specific name of the type species of *Hydromantes* Gistel, 1848);
- (5) to place on the Official Index of Rejected and Invalid Generic Names in Zoology the following names:
 - (a) *Geotriton* Bonaparte, [1832], as suppressed in (1) above;
 - (b) *Hydromantoides* Lanza & Vanni, 1981 (a junior objective synonym of *Hydromantes* Gistel, 1848).

Additional reference

Dubois, A. 1981. Liste des genres et sous-genres nominaux de Ranoidea (Amphibiens Anoures) du monde, avec identification de leurs espèces-types: conséquences nomenclaturales. *Monitore Zoologico Italiano*, (n.s.) 15: 225–284.

Comments on the proposed conservation of the family-group name

PHRYNOBATRACHINAE Laurent, 1941 (Amphibia, Anura)

(Case 2362; see BZN 51: 240–246; 52: 269–271)

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I fully support the proposal to give the name PHRYNOBATRACHINAE Laurent, 1941 precedence over HEMIMANTIDAE Hoffman, 1878, PETROPEDETINAE Noble, 1931 and CACOSTERNINAE Noble, 1931. Prof Dubois's case is well put; the two most important issues are:

1. If the criterion of established usage is followed, then the name PHRYNOBATRACHINAE should be adopted since it has been used more often than PETROPEDETINAE, as Dubois demonstrated in his application (BZN 51: 241).

2. If priority is the criterion, then PETROPEDETINAE is not the oldest name for the subfamily; as Dubois noted (BZN 51: 242), the earlier (though unused) name HEMIMANTIDAE Hoffmann, 1878 (as HEMIMANTINAE) is available.

Frost & Lynch (in Frost, 1985) were in error when they recorded that PETROPEDETINAE was the 'nomenclaturally correct' name for this family group. They were aware of the older HEMIMANTIDAE, since they mentioned the name. Their choice of PETROPEDETINAE fulfilled neither the criterion of established usage nor that of the oldest available name, and they had no good reason for preferring its adoption over PHRYNOBATRACHINAE or HEMIMANTIDAE.

In their comment Frost & Savage (BZN 52: 270–271) have wrongly represented the current situation in three particulars:

(1) The work by Frost (1985) has been adopted as the official classification of amphibians for CITES enforcement purposes, but classification and nomenclature are dynamic subjects and many changes have occurred since 1985, necessitating the appearance of an updated version of *Amphibian species of the world* (Duellman, 1993). One may safely suppose that this 372-page document of additions and corrections to the 1985 work will also be adopted by CITES.

(2) In the new work, Duellman (1993, p. 232) extended the 1985 comment under PETROPEDETINAE to include the citation of two important works, Poynton & Broadley (1985) and Laurent (1986), which used PHRYNOBATRACHINAE as the family-group name, but there were none using PETROPEDETINAE. Duellman also recorded Dubois's (1992) use of the name PHRYNOBATRACHIDAE at family rank (see BZN 51: 242). Thus, the statement by Frost & Savage (BZN 52: 270) that PHRYNOBATRACHINAE and PETROPEDETINAE 'have about equal frequencies of usage' and consequently the conservation of the junior synonym PHRYNOBATRACHINAE 'does not contribute to stability' is not only incorrect, as Dubois demonstrated in his application (BZN 51: 241), but is contrary to Duellman's (1993) updated comments.

(3) Frost & Savage (BZN 52: 270) noted that 'the author of the name PHRYNOBATRACHINAE, R. Laurent, was one of the contributing reviewers to the PETROPEDETINAE section' of Frost (1985). If their intention is to imply Laurent's agreement for their preference for the name PETROPEDETINAE, this is negated by Laurent's (1986) usage of PHRYNOBATRACHINAE, cited by Duellman (1993).

As noted in para. 8 of the application, taxonomic need for family-group names is dependent upon the systematic relationships of the type species of *Phrynobatrachus* Günther, 1862, *P. natalensis* (A. Smith, 1849), with the type species of the genera upon which the other family-group names are based. The supraspecific systematics of the amphibians comprising the group in question are in turmoil. Schmidt & Inger (1959, p. 136) commented: 'Probably no genus of African Salientia, with the exception of *Hyperolius*, gives taxonomists as much difficulty as *Phrynobatrachus*'. The only detailed appraisal of the supraspecific-level systematics of *Phrynobatrachus* and its allied genera is that of Laurent (1940). Further systematic research on this group is urgently needed. The application of family-group names to this group of amphibians is premature until further work has been carried out. The possibility that *Hemimantis* may be needed as a generic name, and perhaps even as the basis of a family-group name, could be inferred from Perret (1988), who noted that *P. calcaratus* (Peters, 1863), the type species of *Hemimantis* by monotypy, and a further four species of West African *Phrynobatrachus* possessed a spine-like appendage on the upper eyelid ('un éperon suprapalpébral') not found in any of the other species of *Phrynobatrachus* listed by Frost (1985). Perret also noted: 'Il est intéressant de noter que ces 5 taxa possèdent aussi chacun des glandes fémorales mâles et présentent un pattern typique contrasté différentiel de face inférieure'.

I support the adoption of Dubois's proposal because it provides stability in the usage of the names concerned.

Additional references

- Duellman, W.E. 1993. *Amphibian species of the world: additions and corrections*. iii, 372 pp. University of Kansas, Lawrence. University of Kansas Museum of Natural History Special Publication No. 21.

- Perret, J.-L. 1988. Les espèces de *Phrynobatrachus* (Anura, Ranidae) à éperon palpébral. *Archives des Sciences* (Genève), **41**: 275–294.
- Schmidt, K.P. & Inger, R.F. 1959. Amphibians exclusive of the genera *Afraxalus* and *Hyperolius*. *Exploration du Parc National de l'Upemba*, **56**: 1–264.

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In their comment (BZN 52: 270) Frost & Savage proposed the precedence of the name PETROPEDETINAE Noble, 1931 over PHRYNOBATRACHINAE Laurent, 1941 for the same taxon, partly on the grounds of priority but mostly on the grounds that the former had been adopted 'in the comprehensive checklist of the amphibians of the world (Frost, 1985)'. In my view this latter argument is completely unacceptable. If it were to be accepted by the Commission in this case one might fear that it would be used again and again in other similar circumstances in the future, which could have consequences in zoological nomenclature as a whole.

In the introduction to his work Frost (1985, p. 1) wrote: 'This checklist is an attempt to report the state of the literature of amphibian systematics and is in no way intended to standardize or institutionalize amphibian taxonomy'. In a detailed commentary (Dubois, 1987) on this book I wrote (pp. 143–144): '... this checklist has been prepared and published much too quickly and it does not fit the requirements which it should fit to be fairly useful to the international batrachological community. What may be feared now is that, despite its statement to the contrary ..., this checklist might tend to 'standardize or institutionalize amphibian taxonomy'. If the numerous mistakes which appear in the book are uncritically repeated by many authors they will become more difficult to rectify. My hope in working on this detailed review has been to limit at least partially this negative impact by providing corrections to some of the mistakes of the book. Other mistakes certainly remain. It will be necessary to take advantage of these and other comments to correct the list and prepare an improved second edition of this book. The sooner this revised edition appears, the better, since it will limit the spread of some mistakes in batrachological publications'. Frost & Savage's comment shows that the fear I expressed was warranted; less than ten years after the publication of this book its editor and one of its contributors think that it should be the standard for amphibian classification and nomenclature. Many of my corrections have been incorporated in a recent update of the checklist (Duellman, 1993). Frost's (1985) work cannot be considered the last word on the nomenclature of amphibians and should not be appealed to as the standard for the usage of names.

Frost (1985, pp. 1–2) stated that in his checklist 'except for suprageneric taxonomy and a very few exceptional cases, a rule of following the most recent revisions has been arbitrarily applied'. No rationale was given for not following this rule for suprageneric taxa. In this present case Frost could have adopted either of two possible alternative courses: (a) to follow the most recent revisions (Dubois, 1981, 1984) in which the name PHRYNOBATRACHINAE was used for the taxon, or (b) to strictly apply the rule of priority, in which case the name HEMIMANTIDAE should have been used. Frost did not follow either of these but chose a third course.